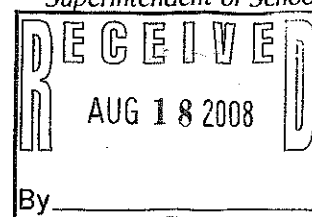


SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT NO. 44

21 Philbrook Street • Bethel, Maine 04217-4045

David W. Murphy Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



Tel. (207) 824-2185 Fax (207) 824-2725

August 14, 2008

Susan Gendron, Commissioner
Department of Education
23 State House Station
Augusta ME 04333

Dear Commissioner Gendron,

As our conversations around possible consolidation with SAU #37 continue, the issue regarding non-resident students remains a potential roadblock to the process. This issue hinders our ability to move forward with any reasonable assurances that our efforts will result in a plan that will both meet the 1,000 student minimum enrollment requirement and also demonstrate sustainability of that population.

As you know from recent email exchanges with the Superintendent of SAU #37, it appears that the combined resident enrollment totals for the two SAU's did reach the 1,000 student level based on the 2006 data. Today's totals, however, appear to fall short of that mark.

At our Regional Planning Committee meeting in MSAD #44 on August 6, 2008, I shared the fact that you had expressed your intent to introduce language that would allow EUT students to be included in our enrollment calculations. Although this was received as positive news, the RPC felt that this recommendation should to be approved by the Legislature before the required commitment of time and effort is invested to bring such a plan to fruition.

As a result of that discussion and based on the information you have provided in your recent emails, MSAD #44 respectfully requests that we receive an extension to the January 2009 approval deadline currently in place.

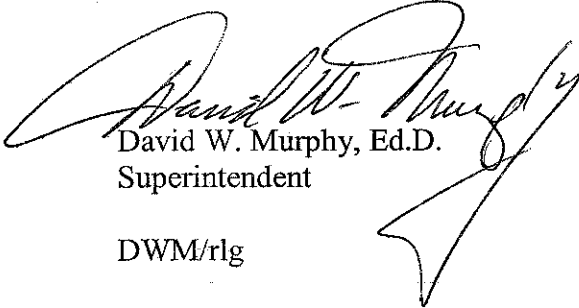
Although we recognize that this date has been established in the law, it appears that all parties now recognize the problems our two districts face regarding any enrollment data that does not include our non-resident students.

We are hopeful that you will understand our specific challenges and look favorably upon this request. If and when legislation is approved that enables us to receive the assurances necessary to guarantee acceptable and sustainable enrollment figures, the MSAD #44 Regional Planning Committee will be ready to aggressively address the establishment of an Alternative Organizational Structure (AOS) in an effort to consolidate with SAU #37.

In addition, there was some concern expressed over the fact that SAU #37 may first need to form an RSU and that the vote to accomplish that may be happening on the same date as the January consolidation vote. Members of the RPC were concerned that this initial vote should be held before additional conversations between our two SAU's take place.

Thank you for your consideration of these issues. Please feel free to contact me if you require any additional information.

Sincerely



David W. Murphy, Ed.D.
Superintendent

DWM/rlg